

Article 6: Non – Discrimination

The Department takes seriously its obligation to ensure that its employees are not subject to impermissible discrimination, harassment, hostile work environment or bullying. Neither the Department nor bargaining unit employees shall discriminate against, intimidate, bully or harass any employee covered by this Agreement in a manner which would violate any applicable constitutional protections or laws because of a designated protected characteristic, membership or non-membership in VSEA, or because of the filing of a complaint or grievance. The Department may promulgate and enforce regulations and policies deemed necessary to properly implement and enforce applicable laws and this Article which prohibit discrimination based upon protected characteristics. The provisions of this Article prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation shall not be construed to change the definition of family or dependent in any employee benefit plan. Any complaint or grievance alleging a violation of this Article shall be initiated and processed at the Department's Executive Director level, and may be further processed through this Agreement's Grievance and Arbitration procedures. The provisions of this Article do not waive or modify any employee's rights and/or obligations specified under state or federal law with respect to the timely filing of any complaint. VSEA shall inform its officers, stewards and staff of the requirements of this Article.